

**Purpose** The PHQ is a 10-item scale intended to evaluate symptoms of depression as defined by the International Classification of Diseases-10. The questionnaire is a simple and inexpensive screening tool for clinical depression, designed to improve rates of diagnosis among primary care physicians. With its proven psychometric properties, it is also suitable for use in research.

**Population for Testing** The scale has been validated with a population of primary care patients between the ages of 18 and 65 years.

**Administration** The PHQ is a self-report, paper-and-pencil measure requiring no more than 5 min for completion.

**Reliability and Validity** The scale's psychometric properties have been analyzed by Rizzo and colleagues [1]. Their research indicates an internal consistency of .79 and a test-retest reliability ranging from .38 to .62. Additionally, they found that a cutoff score of 9 yields a

sensitivity of .78 and a specificity of .83. Approximately one-third of those individuals scoring above 9 were considered false positives. Researchers were also hoping the measure could be used to screen for individuals who might benefit from treatment with antidepressants: in this regard, a cutoff score of 10 provided good sensitivity (.84) and specificity (.78).

**Obtaining a Copy** A copy of the scale can be found in an article published by Rizzo and colleagues [1].

**Scoring** Respondents rate the frequency with which they have experienced each depressive symptom over the previous two weeks: scales range from 0 ("never") to 2 ("most days"). Total scores fall between 0 and 20, with higher scores indicating more acute depressive symptoms. A cutoff score of 9 is recommended for identifying individuals at high risk of experiencing clinical depression.

# PERSONAL HEALTH QUESTIONNAIRE

This questionnaire asks you how you have been feeling in the past 2 weeks. Check the reply that most nearly applies to you in the following questions.

	Not at all	Occasionally	Most days in past 2 weeks
1. Have you been feeling sad or depressed most of the day?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Have you lost interest in things you generally enjoy?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Do you get tired easily, or lack energy?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Loss of condence or self-esteem ?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Had difficulty concentrating?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Had sleep disturbance of any kind?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Had decreased appetite with weight loss?			
or			
Noticed increased appetite with weight gain?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Noticed that you are slowed up?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
or			
Inability to keep still?			
9. Unreasonable feelings of self-reproach or guilt?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. Thoughts of death, or thoughts of taking your own life?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

If you have reported at least 4 of these symptoms, how long have you had such symptoms?

☐ Less than 1 month, ☐ 1 month to 1 year, ☐ More than 1 year, ☐ More than one year but getting worse recently.

Rizzo et al. [1]. © Cambridge Journals, reproduced with permission.

## Reference

1. Rizzo, R., Piccinelli, N., Mazzi, M. A., Bellantuono, C., & Tansella, M. (2000). The personal health questionnaire: a new screening instrument for detection of ICD-10 depressive disorders in primary care. *Psychological Medicine*, 30, 831–840.

## Representative Studies Using Scale

- Bellantuono, C., Mazzi, M. A., Tansella, M., Rizzo, R., & Goldberg, D. (2002). The identification of depression and the coverage of antidepressant drug prescriptions in Italian general practice. *Journal of Affective Disorders*, 72(1), 53–59.
- Husain, N., Creed, F., & Tomenson, B. (2000). Depression and social stress in Pakistan. *Psychological Medicine*, 30, 395–402.